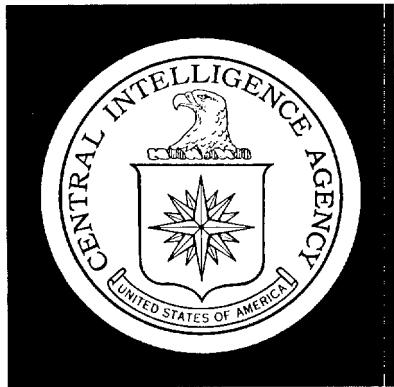


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C SYRIA: Damascus has finally acknowledged that Baath Party leadership changes are in the making and has outlined the guiding principles for future Syrian policies.

Since last Friday, the foreign press has been carrying a welter of often conflicting stories on political changes in Syria, but the regime itself had refrained from any public comment. Yesterday, however, a newly formed "provisional regional command" of the Syrian Baath Party, still unidentified but presumably allied with Defense Minister Asad, broadcast its intention to carry out a specific program of action for a "transition period" until a party congress can elect a new Syrian regional command.

In its announcement the party appeals for popular support and pledges to draft a permanent constitution, states the need to strengthen the armed forces, promises new laws on local government, and assures the observance of civil liberties. The announcement also stresses increased cooperation with the "progressive" Arab states, particularly Egypt, and expresses hope for increased Arab unity as well as continued support for the Palestinian and all Arab progressive movements. Internationally, close cooperation with the socialist states, particularly the USSR, will be continued.

Asad, according to most accounts, moved against the civilian leadership last Friday at the conclusion of a party congress. This gathering had been convened in late October, allegedly to settle differences that Asad and his military supporters had with the civilians over Syria's intervention in the recent Jordanian crisis.

(continued)

¶ If the development of the new leadership follows the general precepts set forth in yesterday's broadcast, Syrian policy will not show any dramatic differences in its basic direction, but there could be some lessening of the political isolation that Damascus has maintained even with its fellow Arab states. Basic changes in attitude toward the West and Israel, however, seem less likely. [redacted]

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NORTH KOREA: North Korea's top leadership has undergone its third major shakeup in four years.

Among the changes announced at the conclusion of the Fifth Party Congress, the most notable are the elevation of men with close personal ties to Kim Il-song and the purge of others with less clear-cut loyalty to him. Dropped from the politburo are such long-time stalwarts of the regime as ex - foreign minister Nam Il and one-time defense minister Kim Kwang-hyop. Two members of Kim Il-song's family, a younger brother and a relative by marriage, have been elevated to full membership on the politburo.

Among others advanced is Pak Song-chol, the second vice premier, and O Chin-u, the chief of the General Staff. Pak is one of the most able of Kim's old cronies from the days of the anti-Japanese guerrilla movement and has presided over the recent warming trend in relations with Peking. General O's promotion also suggests a continuation of present policies. He strongly supported Kim during the 1968 purge of the military and is identified with the current policy of emphasizing propaganda and political subversion of the South rather than armed harassment.

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JAPAN-OKINAWA: Sunday's elections for Okinawa's first postwar representatives to the Japanese Diet turned out as expected.

Prime Minister Sato's conservative party picked up three of the seven seats with the others scattered among the leftist parties. Japan's opposition parties will portray the results as a popular rebuke to the government, but in fact, the Okinawans do not as yet identify closely with mainland politics. The winners seem to have been selected more for their personal appeal than for their ideological orientation. It is not yet clear what effect the considerable partisan campaigning by mainland political leaders had on the outcome.

The new representatives will take their seats in the Japanese Diet later this month. They will have only nonvoting observer rights until Okinawan reversion in 1972.

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HAITI: Rumors are circulating in Port-au-Prince that President Duvalier is seriously ill.

Talk of Duvalier's indispositions is not uncommon, but there are a number of indicators that lend greater credibility to this latest round of speculation. All of Duvalier's children returned from France early last month, and his son-in-law, Ambassador to France Max Dominique, arrived in Haiti on 21 October. [redacted]

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A parade is scheduled tomorrow to celebrate armed forces day. Duvalier's failure to make an appearance would be strong evidence that he is indeed ill. [redacted]

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GUYANA: The Burnham government has reiterated its intention to acquire at least 51-percent interest in the bauxite industry.

In recent public statements and during conversations with US Embassy officials, Guyanese leaders have said that their government is prepared to offer US- and Canadian-owned bauxite companies some form of compensation for their equity during talks scheduled to begin on 7 December. Although Prime Minister Burnham has not specified publicly that he will try to get precisely 51 percent, he has made it clear that his goal is "substantial equity," and he has used the word "control".

Two government officials have implied that if a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached with Western companies, Guyana might turn to Communist Eastern Europe for help with its bauxite industry.

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SUDAN: Prime Minister Numayri has removed one of his chief rivals and two strongly leftist ministers from the cabinet.

Details are lacking, but the Sudanese Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) reportedly has fired from their civilian and military positions Interior Minister Hamadallah as well as Assistant Prime Ministers al-Nur and al-Ata. Hamadallah has been regarded by some as the second strongest man in the RCC. Al-Nur and al-Ata, both of whom are reputed to be former Communists, gained their latest posts last July but had been members of the RCC since its formation.

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[redacted] Hamadallah's influence within the government may have been seen by Numayri as sufficient to threaten the unity of the RCC. [redacted]

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SOUTH VIETNAM: Retired General Duong Van Minh has told a French news service that he will run for president in next year's election. [redacted]

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[redacted] the former chief of state is assembling a campaign staff and making plans for the contest, slated for next fall. "Big" Minh still retains considerable popularity as a result of his role in the overthrow of the Diem regime in 1963. He would be a formidable vote-getter in a contest with President Thieu. [redacted]

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VENEZUELA: Occidental Petroleum has won three of the five new oil areas, or blocks, the government opened for bidding, and Shell and Mobil have each been awarded one. The companies believe that the blocks could increase their known reserves of 15 billion barrels in Venezuela by another two to three billion. Crude oil production in the new areas, expected to be about 400,000 barrels per day by 1974, will be partly offset by declining output from existing wells, however. The \$220 million estimated to be needed to develop the blocks should give the oil industry and the economy in general a healthy financial and psychological boost. The government will receive about 85 percent of the profits, and after a three-year exploration period the companies will have to return 80 percent of the acreage to the government.

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FEDAYEEN: The principal Palestinian commando groups are planning a formal merger of their military and political organizations into a single "Palestinian Liberation Front." According to an announcement by the fedayeen central committee--the body which attempts to coordinate commando activities--the first step will be a central committee meeting in Amman this Friday to agree upon the merger formula. The move appears to be a victory for Fatah, one of the more moderate organizations that has been pressing since the September crisis in Jordan for a united front to exercise greater control over individual organizations. The durability of the merger remains questionable, however, because most of the fedayeen groups appear to be going along for temporary tactical reasons.

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ISRAEL: Prime Minister Golda Meir indicated in a speech in the Knesset yesterday that Israel intends to hold out for some rectification of the standstill violations along the Suez Canal as its price for resuming the Jarring talks. She appeared to soften the Israeli line somewhat, however, in that she did not demand a total missile roll-back, but only spoke vaguely of creating the proper "conditions" to satisfy Israel and justify its return to the talks. At one point, the prime minister expressed doubt that Israel would obtain "total fulfillment of its fair claim." Mrs. Meir's address follows statements made last week by Minister of Defense Dayan which stirred wide speculation that Israel would return to the talks without any rectification of the missile violations. [redacted] [redacted]

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